

Where Do You Stand? Answers

1. Domestic violence affects only a small percentage of the population

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Domestic and sexual violence affect a large percentage of the population, cutting across all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic boundaries. According to statistics one in three women is a victim of domestic violence. One in three girls and one in six boys are victims of sexual abuse before they reach the age of 18.

2. Domestic violence occurs mostly in lower socioeconomic groups

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Domestic violence occurs at all socioeconomic levels. Financial pressures may put pressure on families that can exacerbate violence, but it is important to remember that socioeconomic pressures are NOT the cause. Domestic violence is a result of the need for one person to exercise power and control over another. The problem is prevalent in upper, middle and lower class communities alike.

3. Women are most often the victims rather than the perpetrators of domestic violence

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. Intimate partner violence is a crime that largely affects women. In 1999, women accounted for 85% of the victims of intimate partner violence. Women experience significantly more partner violence than men do: 25 percent of surveyed women, compared with 8 percent of surveyed men, said they were raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, or date in their lifetime

4. Children who are abused often become abusers themselves

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. While approximately seventy-three percent of abusers were victims of violence as children, not all victims turn into batterers. Many victims grow up to be loving, healthy parents.

5. Alcohol and drug abuse cause violent behavior so staying sober, or with sober people, will prevent sexual or physical assaults

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Although alcohol and/or drugs are present in almost 50% of abuse cases, they are never the cause of violence. An insatiable need for power and control is the cause for domestic violence. Alcohol and drugs may loosen inhibitions allowing batterers to unleash violent behaviors.

6. When there is domestic violence in a same-sex relationship, it's usually a "fair fight" (a fight between equals)

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Statistics show that domestic violence is equally common in same-sex and heterosexual relationships. Stereotypes about men and women may prevent us from acknowledging domestic violence. Beliefs that “boys will be boys” or that “women never fight” are a way of ignoring the power and control issue that is present in all domestic violence situations. Just because the couple may be equal in strength doesn’t mean that one cannot exercise power and control over the other.

7. Batterers are hard to identify in public because they hide their behavior

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. It is often very difficult to identify a batterer. Domestic violence is one of the most clandestine problems. Batterers are often skillful manipulators, knowing how to present a good image so that the violence remains a secret. Many people are surprised when they learn that their neighbor, friend or family member is a batterer.

8. Abuse does not stop and may even intensify when a woman is pregnant

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. According to statistics, women are at greater risk of being victimized by domestic abuse when they are pregnant. Batterers may feel increasingly threatened and jealous of the victim’s attention towards the unborn baby, and become more violent as a result.

9. Children living in homes where domestic violence is present probably aren't affected emotionally unless the violence is targeted at them

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Violence in the home doesn't just affect the person being abused; it affects everyone in the home, including children. Children may witness the abuse in a number of different ways: they may be in the room and see their mother being abused; they may hear their parents fighting; they may see the aftermath of the abuse when they see their mother's bruises or injuries. Studies have shown that children who grow up in violent homes are more likely to withdraw and have behavioral problems. As they get older, these children often blame themselves for not stopping the abuse. This can lead to further withdrawal, depression, and substance abuse.

10. Most sexual assaults occur between strangers

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. In most cases of sexual assault the perpetrator knows the victim. Approximately 43% are raped by a friend or acquaintance, 17% by a partner or significant other, 34% by a stranger and 2% by a relative.

11. A person can be sexually assaulted by the person they are married to

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. Sexual assaults can and do occur within marital relationships. Most often, these assaults occur within a context of on-going domestic violence. While reports and prosecutions of spousal rape are fairly infrequent, some convictions have occurred.

12. Some people ask to be sexually assaulted by their behavior and/or dress

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Rape is a crime of power disguised as sex. The words "dress provocatively" can be replaced with any number of different words, like "are intoxicated," "flirt with men," or "hitchhike." The truth is that no one deserves to be raped, no matter what they were doing. It is not up to someone to avoid being raped. It is the obligation of people to decide not to rape.

13. The rate of false reports of sexual assaults is the same as rates of false reports of any other major crime

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. The rate of false reports of rape is approximately **2 - 3%** which is no different than that for other crimes. This is different than the **8%** of reports which are unfounded. This means that in 8% of the rape cases reported the investigators or prosecutors deemed that the case was not prosecutable for any number of reasons. Only **2 - 3%** of the reports however were fabricated stories.

14. Most sexual assault is spontaneous and happens when a man become so sexually aroused they are unable to stop themselves

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. We live in a society that promotes the domination of women – from relationships to pornography. People do not rape because they want sexual gratification. They rape to overpower. I'm going to be frank here. Masturbation provides sexual release and does not turn a person into a criminal. A lot of people choose that option, rather than becoming criminals. Just because a man has an erection it doesn't mean that he has to put it somewhere. Although it may be desirable there are no physical consequences if a man doesn't have sex when he is aroused.

15. Only young attractive women and girls are sexually assaulted

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. This myth exists because people view rape as a sexually motivated crime. Again, it is not. Rape is a crime of power, perpetrated by people who find gratification in overpowering. It doesn't matter how sexy or attractive the victim is perceived as being. Sexual assault affects women of all ages. Persons with disabilities are at 1.5 to 5 times the risk of sexual abuse and assault as are members of the general population. Among developmentally disabled adults, as many as 83% of the women and 32% of the men have been victims of sexual assault. One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually assaulted by the age of 18. Of older women (age range of 55-87) who were rape victims 79% were attacked by strangers. However, most rape, and specifically acquaintance rape, happens to women between the ages of 15 and 25.

16. Men who sexually assault boys are gay. Therefore, gay men should not be allowed to be teachers, coaches, Boy-Scout leaders, etc.

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. The vast majority of males who sexually assault other males (including children) are heterosexual. Men and women are assaulted for basically the same reasons: so the assailant can vent hostility and feel a sense of power. Fear of homosexuality ironically leads some men to attack gay men. The motivations for same-sex assault are power and anger. Sexual orientation is not a motivation for sexual assault.

17. Native women experience the highest rates of violent crimes – even more than Black males

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. Native women have higher per capita rates of violent criminal victimization than whites, blacks, or Asians in the United States. The violent crime rate for American Indian females during 1992-96 period was 98 per 1,000 females, a rate higher than that found among white females (40 per 1,000) or black females (56 per 1,000).

18. Native men perpetrate the most violence against Native women

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

False. Native women are more likely than women of other races to experience violence at the hands of someone of a different race.

19. Native women report more assaults and require more medical attention per assault

TRUE UNSURE FALSE

True. Native women were the most likely to report rape victimization and are more likely to have been injured than were white or Asian crime victims. Nearly a third of the American Indian violent crime victims were injured during the incident opposed to a quarter of all violence victims of all races were injured during the incident.

Sources:

National Violence Against Women Survey, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, American Indians and Crime, (AMA. Sexual Assault in America. November 6, 1995). (Rapaport, Karen R. and C. Dale Psoey, "Sexually Coercive College Males, "Acquaintance Rape: The Hidden Crime, edited by Andrea Parrot, John Wiley and Sons, 1991), *Sobey, Violence and Abuse in the Lives of People with Disabilities, 1994. Sexual Assault of the Elderly Victim. "Journal of Interpersonal Violence", 3/1992.*